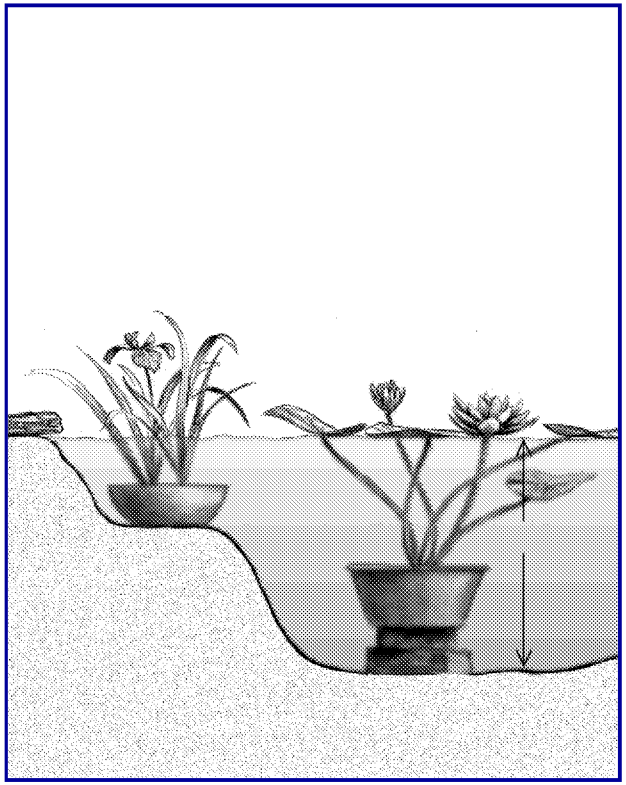
HOW-TO BOOKLET #3136

MAKING A WATER GARDE

TOOL & MATERIAL CHECKLIST

- ❑ Spade
- ❑ Tape Measure
- ❑ Plant Containers
- ❑ Pea Gravel
- ❑ Whe
- ❑ Pond
- ❑ Edgi
- ❑ Wate
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑

Read This Entire How-To Booklet For Specific Tools and Materials Not Noted in the Basics Listed Above.



A garden pond is a pleasing addition tc
a few minutes spent contemplating a g
weather is hot, just the sight of a small
scarce to begin with. In addition to th
grow some intriguing and beautiful pl
pond is the hub of a thriving miniature
and adults.

In this How-To-Booklet, we'll describ
a selection of plants to get your water

PLANNING

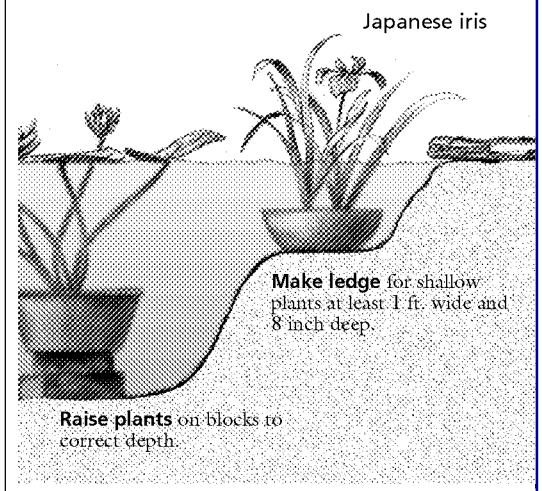
Even a small backyard pond involves c
if not impossible, to move. Take time t
your family's activities. Talk with estab
(Inquire about local water-gardening g
water gardeners.)

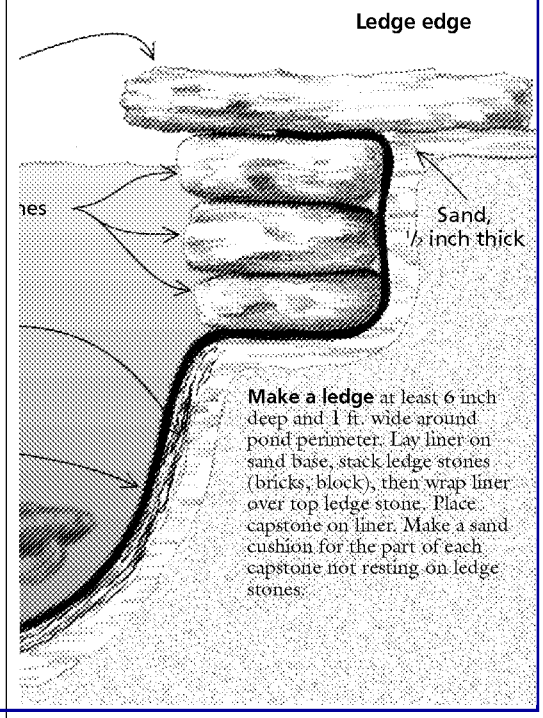
While you're pondering your design ar
plants are sun lovers—site your pond w
the pond on your property's lowest sp
rainstorm. Land lower than the pond c
cleaning. Avoid areas filled with tree rc
own level; a relatively flat spot will save

BUILDING A LINED POND

1

2





3 Dig. Ground that is slightly moist is
dig. Slope the sides of the hole in at
from vertical. If you have the room,
want to make part of the perimeter
shallow slope, which mimics many c
ponds and provides an attractive spo
birds to visit. Remove rocks, roots,
debris that might pose a danger to t

4 Level the perimeter of the pond. Re
level on a long straight board laid ac
hole to check. Fill low spots with ea
removed from the hole. If you want
stones to lie flush with the surrounc
dig a ledge around the perimeter to
modate their thickness and that of t
builder's sand or mortar in which th

5 Spread a layer of builder's sand about
thick on the bottom and sides of the
tion. Layers of newspaper, old sheets,
kets placed below or on top of the sa
extra insurance against puncture.

6 Stretch the liner over the hole, weight
edges with just enough bricks or ston
it in place. Now add water from the g
hose. The weight of the water will gra
the liner into the hole. As the water p
liner against the sides, make tucks and
where necessary to help the liner conf
smoothly to the contours. (If your po
you may need to stand in it to smooth

7 To accommodate runoff after a rain
an overflow outlet. This can be as si
channel cut at water level through t
ground nearby, with stones and peb
hold the liner in place and obscure i
sight. Or it can be buried drain pipe
that empties into a rock-filled dry w

Edging the pond. When the pond is full c
smooth the liner around the perimeter and
overlap the surrounding soil about 1 foot T
plest pond edge is made by laying capstone
of the liner. Extend the capstones 2 inches

PLANTS IN THE POND

1

2

3

4

with the soil surface at or even above the water. Free-floating plants don't need soil to anchor them. Just toss them in (gently); some can be anchored in soil if you want to confine them to a certain spot.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE

Like any container-grown plant, a water plant needs regular feeding; timing varies according to the plant and the type of fertilizer. Special tablets formulated for water plants are easy to apply—just push them into the soil.

Water plants attract certain pests, and you'll have to decide how much damage you can tolerate before controls are warranted. If your pool contains fish or other wildlife, most pesticides are out. You can control aphids on water lilies (or other plants) by knocking them into the water with a well-directed spray from the garden hose. Zap caterpillars with the biological control Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt); encourage birds and beneficial insects. Good hygiene keeps down pest and disease problems, and helps keep water clear and inviting. Remove diseased and damaged plant parts as soon as you see them. Keep water clear of leaves and other debris.

Within the first several months your pond is likely to bloom with algae. As the plants mature and shade more of the water, the bloom should subside. If not, try adding some oxygenating plants, which compete with algae for nutrients, or fish, which eat algae. As a last resort, you can try chemical controls—be sure to find one that won't harm other plants or fish.

Plants hardy for your region can be overwintered in the pond if it doesn't freeze to the bottom; the layer of ice serves as insulation. Cut back foliage after a killing frost and place plants on the pond bottom. Fish can also overwinter under the ice, but you'll need to maintain an unfrozen area with a pond deicer to allow gases harmful to the fish to escape. If the pond might freeze to the bottom, remove the containers and cut away all growth above the soil. Cover each container with moist newspaper, enclose it in a plastic bag, and store where temperatures stay below 40°F.

SOME RECOMMENDED WATER PLANTS

Plant Names (Common/Botanical)	**Comments**
DEEP-WATER PLANTS	
Hardy water lilies (Nymphaea spp.)	Numerous cultivars with striking, slightly fragrant star-shaped flowers in a range of colors. Leaves float on surface of water, flowers on or just above.
Tropical water lilies (Nymphaea spp.)	Numerous cultivars producing larger flowers in greater quantities than hardy water lilies. Flowers are intensely fragrant. Look for night-blooming as well as day-blooming varieties. Night bloomers are particularly fragrant.
Nuphar (Nuphar spp.)	Grown for their large (up to 2 ft. across) floating leaves.
SHALLOW-WATER PLANTS	
Arrowhead (Sagittaria spp.)	Named for distinctive shape of leaves, which rise several feet above water. Smallish flowers borne on spikes in mid- to late summer. S. sinensis contributes oxygen to water; sword-shaped leaves grow to 3 ft. tall.
Cardinal flower (Lobelia cardinalis)	Spikes of lovely red flowers rise 3 to 4 ft. above water in late summer.
Cattail (Typha spp.)	A favorite of children, featuring long grassy leaves and familiar cigar-shaped catkins. Look for smaller T. laxmanii for smaller ponds.
Iris (Iris spp.)	Beautiful flowering plants. Japanese, Siberian, and Louisiana irises will grow with "wet feet." I. laevigata 'Variegata' is grown for its striped leaves.
Lotus (Nelumbo spp.)	Large, beautiful flowers and handsome leaves up to 2 ft. across rise above surface of water to heights of 5 ft. Equally attractive seedpods. Heat lovers, they bloom in late summer. Need large pots and lots of feeding.
Pickerel rush (Pontederia cordata)	Lance-shaped leaves on 2-ft. stalks joined in late summer by spikes of starlike blue flowers that last a long time. Start plants shallow; increase depth gradually.
Japanese primrose (Primula japonica)	Tall stalks bear flowers in a whorled candelabra.
Sweet flag (Acorus spp.)	Grown for grassy, irislike foliage. There are striped (variegated) types as well as smaller varieties.
Marsh marigold (Caltha palustris)	Cheerful buttercup flowers and bright green foliage in spring or early summer. Plant dies back and goes dormant about a month after flowering.
Watercress (Nasturtium officinale)	Prolific plants grow free-floating in gently moving water. Buy seeds or plants from herb specialists.
FREE-FLOATING PLANTS	
Anacharis (Elodea canadensis)	Excellent hardy oxygenating plant; grows submerged.
Water fern (Ceratopteris thalictroides)	Edible leaves rise 1 ft. above water. Not hardy.
Water lettuce (Pistia stratiotes)	Little lettuces look like a floating salad display.
Water milfoil (Myriophyllum aquaticum)	An oxygenator with feathery leaves that are bright yellow-green, tipped red in autumn, and rise several inches out of water.

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